Counsels And Reminiscences

Most of what follows has been gathered from the conversations of Soeur Therese with her novices. Her advice cannot but prove helpful to helpful to souls within the cloister, and likewise to many in the world who may be attracted by her simple and easy *little way* to God.

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One of the novices, greatly discouraged at the thought of her imperfections, tells us that her mistress spoke to her as follows:

" You make me think of a little child that is learning to stand but does not yet know how to walk. In his desire to reach the top of the stairs to find his mother, he lifts his little foot to climb the first stair. It is all in vain, and at each renewed effort he falls. Well, be like that little child. Always keep lifting your foot to climb the ladder of holiness, and do not imagine that you can mount even the first step. All God asks of you is good will. From the top of the ladder He looks lovingly upon you, and soon, touched by your fruitless efforts, He will Himself come down, and, taking you in His arms, will carry you to His Kingdom never again to leave Him. But should you cease to raise your foot, you will be left for long on the earth.

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" The only way to advance rapidly in the path of love is to remain always very little. That is what I did, and now I can sing with our holy Father, St. John of the Cross:

' Then I abased myself so low, so very low,
That I ascended to such heights, such heights indeed,
That I did overtake the prey I chased!' "

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Under a temptation which seemed to me irresistible, I said to her: "This time. I cannot surmount it." She replied: "Why seek to surmount it? Rather pass beneath. It is all well for great souls to soar above the clouds when the storm rages; and we have simply to suffer the showers. What does it matter if we get wet? We shall dry ourselves in the sunshine of love.

" It recalls a little incident of my childhood. One day a horse was standing in front of the garden gate, and preventing us from getting through. My companions talked to him and tried to make him move off, but while they were still talking I quietly slipped between his legs . . . Such is the advantage of remaining small."

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" Our Lord said to the mother of the sons of Zebedee: '*To sit on my right or left hand is for them for whom it is prepared by my Father.*'[1] I imagine that these chosen places,

[1] *Cf.* Matt. xx. 23.

which have been refused alike to Saints and Martyrs, will be reserved for little children; and did not David foretell it when he said that '*the little Benjamin will preside amidst the assemblies*[2] of the Saints.'"

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" Your are wrong to find fault with this thing and with that, or to try and make everyone see things as you see them. We desire to be '*as little children*,' and little children don not know what is best: to them all seems right. Let us imitate their ways. Besides, there is no merit in doing what reason dictates."

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" My patrons and my special favorites in Heaven are those who, so to speak, stole it, as the Holy Innocents and the Good Thief. The great Saints won it by their works; I wish to be like the thieves and to win it by stratagem - a stratagem of love which will open its gates both to me and to poor sinners. In the Book of Proverbs the Holy Ghost encourages me, for He says: '*Come to me, little one, to learn subtlety!*'"[3]

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" What would you do if you could begin over again your religious?"

" I think I should do as I have already done."

" Then you do not share the feeling of the hermit who said: ' While a quarter of an hour, or even a breath of life still remains to me, I shall fear the fires of hell, even though I should have spent long years in penance'?"

" No, I do not share that fear; I am too small. Little children are not damned."

" You are ever seeking to be as little children are, but tell us what must be done to obtain that childlike spirit. 'Remaining little' – what does it mean?"

" 'Remaining little' means – to recognize one's nothingness, to await everything from the Goodness of God, to avoid being too much troubled at our faults; finally, not to worry over amassing spiritual riches, not to be solicitous about anything. Even amongst the poor, while a child is still small, he is given what is necessary; but, once he is grown up, his father will no longer feed him, and tells him to seek work and support himself. Well, it was to avoid hearing this, that I have never wished to grow up, for I feel incapable of earning my livelihood, which is Life Eternal!"

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In imitation of our saintly Mistress I also wished never to grow up; she called me therefore "the little one," and during the retreat she wrote me the following notes:

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[2] *Cf.* Matt. xx. 23

[3] *Cf.* Prov. i. 4.

“ Do not fear to tell Jesus that you love Him, even though you may not feel that love. In this way you will compel Him to come to your aid, and to carry you like a little child who is too weak to walk.

“ It is indeed a great source of trial, when everything looks black, but this does not depend entirely on yourself. Do all in your power to detach your heart from earthly cares, especially from creatures; then be assured Our Lord will do the rest. He could not permit you to fall into the abyss. Be comforted, little one! In Heaven everything will no longer look black, but dazzling white. There all will be clothed in the Divine radiance of Our Spouse – the Lily of the Valley. Together we will follow Him withersoever He goeth. Meantime we must make good use of this life’s brief day. Let us give Our Lord pleasure, let us by self-sacrifice give Him souls! Above all, let us be little – so little that everyone might tread on us underfoot without our even seeming to suffer pain.

“ I am not surprised at the failures of the little one; she forgets that in her role of missionary and warrior she ought to forego all childish consolations. It is wrong to pass one’s time in fretting, instead of sleeping on the Heart of Jesus.

“ Should the little one fear the dark of the night, or complain at not seeing Him who carries, let her shut her eyes. It is the one sacrifice God asks. By remaining thus, the dark will cease to terrify, because she will not see it, and before long, peace – if not joy – will re-enter her soul.”

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To help me accept a humiliation she confided to me what follows:

“ If I had not been received into the Carmel, I would have entered a Refuge, and lived there unknown and despised among the poor ‘penitents.’ My joy would have been to pass for one, and I would have become an apostle among my companions, telling them my thoughts on the Infinite Mercy of God.”

“ But how could you have hidden your innocence from your Confessor?”

“ I would have told him that while still in the world I made a general confession, and that it was forbidden me to repeat it.”

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“ Oh! When I think of all I have to acquire!”

“ Or rather to lose! It is Jesus Who takes upon Himself to fill your soul according as you rid it of imperfections. I see clearly that you are mistaking the road, and that you will never arrive at the end of you journey. You want to climb the mountain, whereas God wishes you to descend it. He is awaiting you in the fruitful valley of humility.”

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“ To me it seems that humility is truth. I do not know whether I am humble, but I do know, that I see the truth in all things.”

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“ Indeed you are a Saint!”

" No, I am not a Saint. I have never wrought the works of a Saint. *I am but a tiny soul whom Almighty God has loaded with His favours.*

" The truth of what I say will be made known to you in Heaven."

" But have you not always been faithful to those favors?"

" Yes, *from the age of three I have never refused our Good God anything.* But still I cannot glorify myself. See how this evening the tree-tops are gilded by the setting sun. So like wise my soul appears to you all shining and golden because it its exposed to the rays of Love. But should the Divine Sun no longer shine thereon, it would instantly be sunk in gloom."

" We too would like to become all golden – what must we do?"

" You must practice the little virtues. This is sometimes difficult, but God never refuses the first grace – courage for self-conquest; and if the soul correspond to that grace, she at once finds herself in God's sunlight. The praise given to Judith has always struck me: *'Thou hast done manfully, and thy heart has been strengthened.'*[4]In the onset we must act with courage. By this means the heart gains strength, and victory follows victory."

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In conformity with the Rule, Soeur Therese never raised her eyes in the refectory, and, as I found great difficulty in this observance, she composed for me the following prayer. It reveals her exceeding humility, because in it she asked a grace which I alone stood in need:

"O Jesus, in honour and in imitation of the example Thou gavest in the house of Herod, Thy two little Spouses resolve to keep their eyes cast down in the refectory. When that impious king scoffed at Thee, O Infinite Beauty, no complaint came from Thy Lips. Thou didst not even deign to fix on him Thy Adorable Eyes. He was not worthy of the favour, but we who are Thy Spouses, we desire to draw Thy Divine Gaze upon ourselves. As often as we refrain from raising our eyes, we beg Thee to reward us by a glance of love, and we even dare ask Thee not to refuse this sweet glance when we fail in our self-control, for we will humble ourselves most sincerely before Thee."

I confided to her that I made no progress, and that consequently I had lost heart.

" Up to the age of fourteen," she said, "I practiced virtue without tasting its sweetness. I desired suffering, but did not think of making it my joy; that grace was vouchsafed me later. My soul was like a beautiful tree the flowers of which had scarcely opened when they fell.

" Offer to God the sacrifice of never gathering any fruits. If He will that throughout your whole life you should feel a repugnance to suffering and humiliation – if He permit that all the flowers of your desires and of your good will should fall to the ground without any fruit appearing, don not worry. At the hour of death, in the twinkling of an eye, He will cause fair fruits to ripen on the tree of your soul.

" We read in the Book of Ecclesiasticus: *'There is an inactive man that wanteth help, is very weak in ability, and full of poverty: yet the Eye of God hath looked upon him for good and hath lifted him up from his low estate, and hath exalted his head: and many have wondered at him, and have glorified God . . .. Trust in God, and stay in thy place.*

[4] Judith xv, 11

For it is easy in the Eyes of God, on a sudden, to make the poor man rich. The blessing of God maketh haste to reward the fruit, and in a swift hour His blessing beareth fruit.'"[5]

"But if I fall, I shall always be found imperfect; whereas you are looked upon as holy."

" That is, perhaps, because I have never desired to be considered so. . . . But that you should be found imperfect is just what is best. Here is your harvest. To believe oneself imperfect and others perfect – this is true happiness. Should earthly creatures think you devoid of holiness, they rob you of nothing, think you devoid of holiness, they rob you of nothing, and you are none the poorer: it is they who lose. For is there anything more sweet than the inward joy of thinking well of our neighbor?

" As for myself I am glad and rejoice, not only when I am looked upon as imperfect, but above all when I feel that it is true. Compliments, on the contrary, do but displease me."

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" God has a special love for you since He entrusts souls to your care."

" That makes no difference, and I am really only what I am in His Eyes. It is not because He wills me to be His interpreter among you, that He loves me more; rather, He makes me your little handmaid. It is for you, and not myself, that He has bestowed upon me those charms and those virtues which you see.

" I often compare myself to a little bowl filled by God with good things. All the kittens come to eat from it, and they sometimes quarrel as to which will have the largest share. But the Holy Child Jesus keeps a sharp watch. ' I am willing you should feed from My little bowl,' He says, ' but take heed lest you upset and break it.'

" In truth there is no great danger, because I am already on the ground. Not so with Prioresses; set, as they are, on tables, they run far more risks. Honors are always dangerous. What poisonous food is served daily to those in high positions! What deadly fumes of incense! A soul must be we well detached from herself to pass unscathed through it all."

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" It is consolation for you to do good and to procure the Glory of God. I wish I were equally favored."

" What if God does make use of me, rather than of another, to procure His Glory! Provided his Kingdom be established among souls, the instrument matters not. Besides, He has no need of anyone.

" Some time ago I was watching the flicker, almost invisible, of a tiny night-light, when one of the Sisters drew near, and lighting her candle in the dying flame, passed it round to light all those of the Community. ' Who dare glory in his own good works' I reflected. ' From one faint spark such as this, it would be possible to set the whole earth on fire.' We often think we receive graces and are divinely illumined by means of brilliant candles. But from whence comes their light? From prayers, perhaps, of some

[5] Ecclus. xi. 12, 13, 22, 23, 24.

humble, hidden soul, whose inward shining is not apparent to human eyes; a soul of unrecognized virtue, and in her own sight of little value – a dying flame.

" What mysteries will yet be unveiled to us! I have often thought that perhaps I owe all the graces with which I am laden, to some little soul whom I shall only know in Heaven.

" It is God's Will that in this world souls shall dispense to each other, by prayer, the treasures of Heaven, in order that when they reach their Everlasting Home they may love one another with grateful hearts, and with an affection far in excess of that which reigns in the most perfect family on earth.

" There no looks of indifference will meet us, because all the Saints will be mutually indebted to each other. No envious glances will be cast, for the happiness of each one of the Blessed will be the happiness of all. With the Doctors of the Church we shall be like unto Doctors; with the Martyrs like unto Martyrs; with the Virgins, like unto Virgins; and just as members of one family are proud one of the other, so without the least jealousy shall we take pride in our brothers and sisters.

" When we see the glory of the Saints, and know that through the secret working of Providence we have contributed to it, who knows whether the joy we shall feel will not be as intense, perhaps sweeter, than the happiness they themselves possess?

" And do you not think that the great Saints, on their side, seeing what they owe to all little souls, will love them with a love beyond compare? The friendships of Paradise will be both sweet and full of surprise, of this I am certain. The familiar friend of an Apostle, or a great Doctor of the Church, may be a shepherd boy, and a simple child may be united in closest intimacy with a Patriarch . . . I long to enter that Kingdom of Love!"

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" Believe me, the writing of pious books, the composing of the sublimest poetry, all that does not equal the smallest act of self-denial. When, however, our inability to good gives us pain, our only resource is to offer up the good works of others, and in this lies the benefit of the Communion of Saints. Recall to mind that beautiful verse of the canticle of our Father, St. John of the Cross:

'Return, my dove!
See on the height
The wounded Hart,
To whom refreshment brings
The breeze, stirred by thy wings."

" Thus the Spouse, the wounded Hart, is not attracted by the height, but only by the breeze from the pinions of the dove – a breeze which one single stroke of wing is sufficient to create."

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" The one thing which is not open to envy is the lowest place. Here alone, therefore, there is neither vanity nor affliction of spirit. Yet, *'the way of a man is not his own,'*[6] and sometimes we find ourselves wishing for what dazzles. In that hour let us in

[6] Jer. x. 23.

all humility take our place among the imperfect, and look upon ourselves as little souls who at every instant need to be upheld by the goodness of God. From the moment He sees us full convinced of our nothingness, and hears us cry out: *' My foot stumbles, Lord, but Thy Mercy is my strength,''* [7] He reaches out His Hand to us. But, should we attempt great thing seven under pretext of zeal, He deserts us. It suffices, therefore, to humble ourselves, to bear with meekness our imperfections. Herein lies – for us – true holiness."

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One day I was complaining of being more tired than my Sisters, for, besides the ordinary duties, I had work unknown to the rest. Soeur Therese replied:

" I should like always to see you a brave soldier, never grumbling at hardships, but considering the wounds of your companions as most serious, and your won as mere scratches. You feel this fatigue so much because no one is aware of it.

" Now the Blessed Margaret Mary, at the time she had two whitlows, confessed that she really suffered from the hidden one only. The other, which she was unable to hide, excited her Sisters' pity and made her an object of compassion. This is indeed a very natural feeling, the desire that people should know of our aches and pains, but in giving way to it we play the coward."

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" When we are guilty of a fault we must never attribute it to some physical cause, such as illness or the weather. We must ascribe it to our own imperfections, without being discouraged thereby. ' Occasions do not make a man fail, but show what he is.'"[8]

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" God did not permit that our Mother should tell me to write poems as soon as I had composed, and, fearful of committing a sing against poverty, I would not ask leave. I had therefore to wait for some free time, and at eight o'clock in the evening I often found it extremely difficult to remember what I had composed in the morning.

" True, these trifles are a species of martyrdom; but we must be careful not to alleviate the pain of the martyrdom by permitting ourselves, or securing permissions for, a thousand and one things which would tend to make the religious both comfortable and agreeable."

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One day, as I was in tears, Soeur Therese told me to avoid the habit of allowing others to see the trifles that worried me, adding that nothing made community life more trying than an unevenness of temper.

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[7] *Cf.* Psalm xciii, 18.
[8] *Imitation*, I, xvi. 4.

" You are indeed right," I answered, "such was my own thought. Henceforward my tears will be for God alone. I shall confide my worries to One Who will understand and console me."

" Tears for God!" she promptly replied, "that must not be. Far less to Him than to creatures ought you to show a mournful face. Our Divine Master has only our monasteries where He may obtain some solace for His Heart. He comes to us in search of rest – to forget the unceasing complaints of His friends in the world, who, instead of appreciating the value of the Cross, receive it far more often with moans and tears. Would you then be as the mediocre souls? Frankly, this is not disinterested love. . . . *It is for us to console our Lord, and not for Him to console us.* His Heart is so tender that if you cry He will dry your tears; but thereafter He will go away sad, since you did not suffer Him to repose tranquilly within you. Our Lord loves the glad heart, the children that greet him with a smile. When will you learn that to hide your troubles from Him, or tell Him gaily that you are happy to suffer for Him?"

" The face is the mirror of the soul," she said once, "and yours, like that of a contented little child, should always be calm and serene. Even when alone, be cheerful, remembering always that you are in the sight of the Angels."

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I was anxious she should congratulate me on what, in my eyes, was an heroic act of virtue; but she said to me:

" Compare this little act of virtue with what our Lord has the right to expect of you! Rather should you humble yourself for having lost so many opportunities of proving your love."

Little satisfied with this answer, I awaited an opportunity of finding out how Soeur Therese herself would act if under trial, and the occasion was not long in coming. Reverend Mother asked us to do some extremely tiring work which bristled with difficulties, and, on purpose, I made it still more difficult for our Mistress.

Not for one second, however, could I detect her in fault, and, heedless of the fatigue involved, she remained gracious and amiable, eager throughout to help others at her own expense. At last I could resist no longer, and I confessed to her what my thoughts had been.

" How comes it," I said, "that you can be so patient? You are ever the same – calm and full of joy." "It was not always the case with me," she replied, "but since I have abandoned all thought of self-seeking, I live the happiest life possible."

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Our dear Mistress used to say that during recreation, more than at any other time, we should find opportunities for practicing virtue.

" If you desire be to draw great profit, do not go with the idea of procuring relaxation, but rather with the intention of entertaining others and practicing complete detachment from self. Thus, for instance, if you are telling one of the Sisters something you think entertaining, and she should interrupt to tell you something else, show yourself interested, even though in reality her story may not interest you in the least. Be careful,

also, not to try to resume what you were saying. In this way you will leave recreation filled with a great interior peace and endowed with fresh strength for the practice of virtue, because you have not sought to please yourself, but others. If only we could realize what we gain in self-denial in all things!"

" You realize it, certainly, for you have always practiced self-denial."

" Yes, I have forgotten myself, and I have tried not to seek myself in anything."

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" When some one knocks at our door, or when we are rung for, we must practice mortification and refrain from doing even another stitch before answering. I have practiced this myself, and I assure it is a source of peace."

After this advice, and according as occasion offered, I promptly answered every summons. One day, during her illness, she was a witness of this, and said:

" At the hour of death you will be very happy to find this to your account. You have just done something more glorious than if, through clever diplomacy, you had procured the good-will of the Government for all religious communities and had been proclaimed throughout France as a second Judith."

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Questioned as to her method of sanctifying meals, she answered:

" In the refectory we have but one thing to do: perform a lowly action with holy thoughts. I confess that the sweetest aspirations of love often come to me in the refectory. Sometimes I am brought to a standstill by the thought that were Our Lord in my place He would certainly partake of those same dishes which are served to me. It is quite probable that during His lifetime he tasted similar food – he must have eaten bread and fruits.

" Here are my little rubrics:

" I imagine myself at Nazareth, in the house of the Holy Family. If, for instance, I am served with a salad, cold fish, wine, or anything pungent in taste, I offer it to St. Joseph. To our Blessed Lady I offer hot food and ripe fruit, and to the infant Jesus our feast day fare, especially rice and preserves. Lastly, when I am served a wretched dinner I say cheerfully: ' To-day, my little ones, it is all for you!'"

Thus in many pretty ways she hid her mortifications. One fast-day, however, when our Reverend Mother ordered her some special food, I found her seasoning it with wormwood because it was too much to her taste. On another occasion I saw her drinking very slowly a most unpleasant medicine. "Make haste," I said, "drink it off at once!" "Oh, no!" she answered; " must I not profit of these small opportunities for penance since the greater ones are forbidden me?"

Towards the end of her life I learned that, during her novitiate, one of our Sisters, when fastening the scapular for her, ran the large pin through her shoulder, and for hours she bore the pain with joy. On another occasion she gave me proof of her interior mortification. I had received a most interesting letter, which was read aloud at recreation, during her absence. In the evening she expressed the wish to read it, and I gave it to her. Later on, when she returned, I begged her to tell me what she thought of one of the points of the letter which I knew ought to have charmed her. She seemed rather confused, and

after a pause she answered: " God asked of me the sacrifice of this letter because of the eagerness I displayed the other day . . . so I have not read it."

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When speaking to her of the mortification of the Saints, she remarked: "It is well that Our Lord warned us: *' In My Father's House there are many mansions, otherwise I would have told you.'* [9]For, if every soul called to perfection was obliged to perform these austerities in order to enter Heaven, He would have told us, and we would have willingly undertaken them. But He has declared that, '*there are many mansions on His House.'* If there are some for great souls, for the Fathers of the Desert and for Martyrs of penance, there must also be one for little children. And in that one a place is kept for us, if we but love Him dearly together with Our Father and the Spirit of Love."

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" While in the world, I used, on waking, to think of all the pleasant and unpleasant things which might happen throughout the day, and if I foresaw nothing but worries I got up with a heavy heart. Now it is quite the reverse. I think of the pains and of the sufferings awaiting me, and I rise, feeling all the more courageous and light of heart in proportion to the opportunities I foresee of proving my love for Our Lord, and of gaining – mother of souls as I am – my children's livelihood. Then I kiss my crucifix, and laying it gently on my pillow, I leave it there while I dress and I say: ' My Jesus, Thou hast toiled and wept enough during Thy three-and-thirty years on this miserable earth. Rest Thee, to-day! It is my turn to suffer and fight.'"

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One washing-day I was sauntering towards the laundry, and looking at the flowers as I passed. Soeur Therese was following, and quickly overtook me: " Is that," she said quietly, " how people hurry themselves when they have children, and are obliged to work to procure them food?"

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" Do you know which are my Sundays and feastdays? They are days on which God tries me most."

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I was distressed at my want of courage, and Soeur Therese said to me: " You are Complaining of what should be your greatest happiness. If you fought only when you felt eagerness, where would be your merit? What does it matter, even if you are devoid of courage, provided you act as though you possessed it? If you feel too lazy to pick up a bit of thread, and yet do so for the love of Jesus, you acquire more merit than for a much nobler action done in a moment of fervor. Instead of grieving, be glad that, by allowing

[9] John xiv. 2.

you to feel your own weakness, Our Lord is furnishing you with an opportunity of saving a greater number of souls."

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I asked her whether Our Lord was not displeased at the sight of my many failings. This was her answer: " Be comforted, for He Whom you have chosen as your spouse has every imaginable perfection; but – dare I say it? – He has one infirmity too – He is blind! And there is a science about which he knows nothing – addition! These two great defects, much to be deplored in an earthly bridegroom, do but make ours infinitely more lovable. Were it necessary that He should be clear-sighted, and familiar with the science of figures, do you not think that, confronted with our many sins, He would send us back to our nothingness? But His Love for us makes Him actually blind.

" If the greatest sinner on earth should repent at the moment of his death, and draw his last breath in an act of love, neither the many graces he had abused, nor the multiplied crimes he had committed, would stand in his way. Our Lord would see nothing, count nothing, but the sinner's last prayer, and without delay He would receive him into the arms of His Mercy.

" But, to make Him thus blind and to prevent Him doing the smallest sum of addition, we must approach Him through His Heart – on that side He is vulnerable and defenseless."

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I had grieved her, and gone to ask her pardon: " If you but knew what I feel!" she exclaimed. " Never have I more clearly understood the love with which Jesus receives us when we seek His forgiveness. If I, His poor little creature, feel so tenderly towards you when you come back to me, what must pass through Our Lord's Divine Heart when we return to Him! Far more quickly than I have just done will He blot out our sins from His memory. . . .Nay, He will even love us more tenderly than before we fell."

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I had an immense dread of the judgments of God, and no argument of Soeur Therese could remove it. One day I put to her the following objection: " It is often said to us that in God's sight the angels themselves are not pure. How, therefore, can you expect me to be otherwise than filled with fear?"

She replied: " There is but one means of compelling God not to judge us, and it is – to appear before Him empty-handed." " And how can that be done?" " It is quite simple: lay nothing by, spend your treasures as you gain them. Were I to live to be eighty, I should always be poor, because I cannot economize. All my earnings are immediately spent on the ransom of souls.

" Were I to await the hour of death to offer my trifling coins for valuation, Our Lord would not fail to discover in them some base metal, and they would certainly have to be refined in Purgatory. Is it not recorded of certain great Saints that, on appearing before the Tribunal of God, their hands laden with merit, they have yet been sent to that place of explanation, because in God's Eyes all our justice is unclean?"

" But," I replied, " if God does not judge our good actions, He will judge our bad ones." " Do not say that! Our Lord is Justice itself, and if He does not judge our good actions, neither will He judge our bad ones. It seems to me, that for Victims of Love there will be no judgment. God will rather hasten to reward with eternal delights His own Love which He will behold burning in their hearts."

" To enjoy such a privilege, would it suffice to repeat that Act of Oblation which you have composed?" " Oh, no! words do not suffice. To be a true Victim of Love we must surrender ourselves entirely. . . .*Love will consume us only in the measure of our self-surrender."*

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I was grieving bitterly over a fault I had committed. " Take your Crucifix," she said, "and kiss it." I kissed the Feet.

" Is that how a child kisses his father? Throw your arms at once round His Neck and kiss His Face." When I had done so, she continued: " This is not sufficient – He must return your caress." I had to press the Crucifix to both my cheeks, whereupon she added: " Now, all is forgiven."

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I told her one day that if I must be reproached I preferred deserving it to being unjustly accused. " For my part," she replied. " I prefer to be charged unjustly because, having nothing to reproach myself with, I offer gladly this little injustice to God. Then, humbling myself, I think how easily I might have deserved the reproach. The more you advance, the fewer the combats; or, rather, the more easy the victory, because the good side of things will be more visible. Then your soul will soar above creatures. As for me, I feel utterly indifferent to all accusations because I have learned the hollowness of human judgment." She added further: " When misunderstood and judged unfavorably, what benefit do we derive from defending ourselves? Leave Things as they are, and say nothing. It is so sweet to allow ourselves to be judged anyhow, rightly or wrongly.

" It is not written in the Gospel that Saint Mary Magdalen put forth excuses when charged by her sister with sitting idle at Our Lord's Feet. She did not say: ' Martha, if you knew the happiness that is mine and if you heard the words that I hear, you too would leave everything to share my joy and my repose.' No, she preferred to keep silent. . . .Blessed silence which giveth such peace to the soul! "

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At a moment of temptation and struggle I received this note: "' *The just man shall correct me in mercy and shall reprove me ; but let not the oil of the sinner perfume my head.'*[10] It is only by the just that I can either be reproved or corrected, because all my Sisters are pleasing to God. It is less bitter to be rebuked by a sinner than by a just man ; but through compassion for sinners, to obtain their conversion, I beseech Thee, O my God, to permit that I may be well rebuked by those just souls who surround me. I ask also

[10] *Cf.* Psalm cxl. 5.

that the *oil of praise,* so sweet to our nature, *may not perfume my head,* that is to say, my mind, by making me believe that I possess virtues when I have merely performed a few good actions.

" Jesus! '*Thy Name is as oil poured,'*[11] and it is into this divine perfume that I desire wholly to plunge myself, far from the gaze of mankind."

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" It is not playing the game to argue with a Sister that she is in the wrong, even when it is true, because we are not answerable for her conduct. We must not be *Justices of the peace* but *Angels of peace* only."

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" You give yourselves up too much to what you are doing," she used to say to us : "you worry about the future as though it were in your hands. Are you much concerned at this moment as to what is happening in the other Carmelite convents, and whether the nuns are busy or otherwise? Does their work prevent you from praying or meditating? Well, just in the same way, you ought to detach yourselves from your own personal labors, conscientiously spending on them the time prescribed, but with perfect freedom of heart. We read that the Israelites, while building the walls of Jerusalem, worked with one hand and held a sword in the other.[12] This is an image of what we should do: avoid being wholly absorbed in our work."

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" One Sunday," Therese relates, " I was going towards the chestnut avenue, full of rejoicing, for it was spring-time, and I wanted to enjoy nature's beauties. What a bitter disappointment! My dear chestnuts had been pruned, and the branches, already covered with buds, now lay on the ground. On seeing this havoc, and thinking that three years must elapse before it could be repaired, my heart felt very sore. But the grief did not last long. ' If I were in another convent,' I reflected, ' what would it matter me if the chestnut tress of the Carmel of Lisieux were entirely cut down?' I will not worry about things that pass. God shall be mya all. I will take my walks in the wooded groves of His Love, whereon none dare lay hands."

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A novice asked her Sisters to help shake some blankets. As they were somewhat liable to tear because of their worn condition, she insisted, rather sharply, on their being handled with care. " What would you do," said Therese to the impatient one, " if it were not your duty to mend these blankets? There would be no thought of self in the matter, and if you did call attention to the fact that they are easily torn, it would be done in quite and impersonal way. In all you actions, you should avoid the least trace of self-seeking."

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[11] Cant. i. 2.
[12] *Cf.* 2 Esdras iv. 17.

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Seeing one of our Sisters very much fatigued, I said to Soeur Therese: " It grieves me to see people suffer, especially those who are holy." She instantly replied: " I do not feel as you do. Saints who suffer never excite my pity. I know they have strength to bear their sufferings, and that through them they are giving great glory to God. But I compassionate greatly those who are not Saints, and who do not know how to profit from suffering. They indeed awake my pity. I would strain every nerve to help and comfort them."

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" Were I to live longer, it is the office of Infirmarian that would most please me. I would not ask for it, but were it imposed through obedience, I should consider myself highly favored. I think I should fulfill its duties with much affection, always mindful of Our Lord's words: *'I was sick, and you visited Me.'*[13] The infirmary bell should be for you as heavenly music and you ought purposely to pass by the windows of the sick that it might be easy for them to summon you. Consider yourself as a little slave whom everyone has the right to command. Could you but see the Angels who from the heights of Heaven watch your combats in this arena1 They are awaiting the end of the fight to crown you and cover you with flowers. You know that we claim to rank as *little Martyrs*. . . .be we must win our palms.

" God does not despise these hidden struggles with ourselves, so much richer in merit because they are unseen: '*The patient man is better than the valiant. And he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh cities.'*[14] Though our little acts of charity, practiced in the dark, as it were, we obtain the conversion of the heathen, help the missionaries, and gain for them plentiful alms, thus building both spiritual and material dwellings for Our Eucharistic God."

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I had seen Mother Prioress showing, as I thought, more confidence and affection to one of our Sisters than she extended to me. Expecting to win sympathy, I told my trouble to Soeur Therese, and great was my surprise when she put me the question: " Do you think you love our Mother very much?" " Certainly! Otherwise I would be indifferent if others were preferred to me."

" Well. I shall prove that you are absolutely mistaken, and that is not our Mother that you love, but yourself. When we really love others, we rejoice at their happiness, and we make every sacrifice to procure it. Therefore if you had this true, disinterested affection, and loved our Mother for her own sake, you would be glad to see her find pleasure even at your expense; and since you think she has less satisfaction in talking with you than with another Sister, you ought not to grieve at being apparently neglected."

[13] Matt. xxv. 36.
[14] Prov. xvi. 32.

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I was distressed at my many distractions during prayers: " I also have many," she said, " but as soon as I am aware of them, I pray for those people the thought of whom is diverting my attention, and in this way they reap the benefits from my distractions. . . .I accept all for the love of God, even the wildest fancies that cross my mind."

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I was regretting a pin which I had been asked for, which I had found most useful. " How rich you are," said Therese, "you will never be happy!"

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The grotto of the Holy Child was in her charge, and, knowing that one of our Mothers greatly disliked perfumes, she never put any sweet-smelling flowers there, net eve a tiny violet. This cost her many a real sacrifice. One day, just as she placed a beautiful artificial rose at the foot of the statue, the Mother called her. Soeur Therese, surmising that it was a bid to remove the rose, was anxious to spare her any humiliation. She therefore took the flower to the good Sister, and forestalling all observations, said: "look, Mother, how well nature is imitated nowadays : would you not think this rose had been freshly gathered from the garden?"

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" There are moments," she told us, " when we are so miserable within, that there is nothing for it but to get away from ourselves. At those times God does not oblige us to remain at home. He even permits our own company to become distasteful to us in order that we may leave it. Now I know no other means of exit save through the doorway of charitable works, on a visit to Jesus and Mary."

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" When I picture the Holy Family, the thought that does me most good is – the simplicity of their home-life. Our Lady and St. Joseph were well aware that Jesus was God, while at the same time great wonders were hidden from them, and – like me – they lived by faith. You have heard those words of the Gospel : *' They understood not the word that He spoke unto them'* ; [15] and those others no less mysterious: *' His Father and Mother were wondering at those things which were spoken concerning Him.'*[16] They seemed to be learning something new, for this word ' wondering' implies a certain amount of surprise."

[15] Luke ii. 50.
[16] Luke ii. 35

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" There is a verse in the Divine Office which I recite each day with reluctance: '*I have inclined my heart to do Thy justifications for ever, because of the reward.*'[17] I hasten to add in my heart: ' My Jesus, Thou knowest I do not serve Thee for sake of reward, but solely out of love, and a desire to win Thee souls."

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" In Heaven only shall we be in possession of the clear truth. On earth, even in matters of Holy Scripture, our vision is dim. It distresses me to see differences in its translations, and had I been a Priest, I would have learned Hebrew, so as to read the Word of God as He deigned to utter it in human speech. "

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Soeur Therese often spoke to me of a well-known toy with which she had amused herself when a child. This was the kaleidoscope, shaped like a small telescope, through which, as it is made to revolve, one perceives an endless variety of pretty colored figures.

" This toy," she said, " excited my admiration and I wondered what could produce so charming a phenomenon, when one day, after a lengthy examination, I found that it consisted simply of tiny bits of paper and cloth scattered inside. A further examination revealed that there were three mirrors inside the tube, and the problem was solved. It became for me the illustration of a great truth.

" So long as our actions, even the most trivial remain within Love's kaleidoscope, so long the Blessed Trinity, figured by three mirrors, imparts to them a wonderful brightness and beauty. The eye-piece is Jesus Christ, and He, looking from outside through Himself into the kaleidoscope, finds perfect all our works. But, should we leave that ineffable abode of Love, He would see but the rags and chaff of unclean and worthless deeds."

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I told Soeur Therese of the strange phenomena produced by magnetism on persons who surrender their will to the hypnotiser. It seemed to interest her greatly, and next day she said to me : "Your conversation yesterday did me so much good! How I long to be hypnotized by Our Lord ! It was my waking thought, and verily it was sweet to surrender Him my will. I want Him to take possession of my faculties in such wise that my acts may no more be mine, or human, but Divine – inspired and guided by the Spirit of Love."

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Before my profession I received through my saintly Novice-mistress a very special grace. We had been washing all day. I was worn-out with fatigue and harassed

[17] Ps. cxviii. 112.

with spiritual worries. That night, before meditation, I wanted to speak to her, but she dismissed me with the remark : " That is the bell for meditation, and I have not time to console ; besides, I see plainly that it would be useless trouble. For the present, God wishes you to suffer alone." I followed her to meditation so discouraged that, for the first time, I doubted of my vocation. I should never be able to be a Carmelite. This life was too hard.

I had been kneeling for some minutes when all at once, in the midst of this interior struggle – without having asked or even wished for peace – I felt a sudden extraordinary change of soul. I no longer knew myself. My vocation appeared to me both lovely and lovable. I saw the sweetness and priceless value of suffering. All the privations and fatigues of the religious life appeared to me infinitely preferable to worldly pleasures, and I came away from my meditation completely transformed.

Next day I told my Mistress what had taken place, and, seeing she was deeply touched, I begged to know the reason. " God is good,' she exclaimed. "last evening you inspired me with such profound pity that I prayed incessantly for you at the beginning of meditation. I besought Our Lord to bring you comfort, to change your dispositions, and show you the value of suffering. He has indeed heard my prayers."

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Being somewhat of a child in my ways, the Holy Child – to help me in the practice of virtue – inspired me with the thought of amusing myself with Him, and I chose the game *ninepins.* I imagined them of all sizes and colors, representing the souls I wished to reach. The ball was – *love*.

In December, 1986, the novices received, for the benefit of the Foreign Missions, various trifles towards a Christmas tree, and at the bottom of the box containing them was a *top* – a rare thing in a Carmelite convent. My companions remarked : "What an ugly thing ! – of what use will it be? " But I, who knew the game, caught hold of it, exclaiming: " Nay, what fun! It will spin a whole day without stopping if it be well Whipped" ; and thereupon I spun it round to their great surprise.

Soeur Therese was quietly watching us, and on Christmas night, after midnight Mass, I found in our cell the famous top, with a delightful letter addressed as follows.

To My Beloved Little Spouse

Player of Ninepins on the Mountain of Carmel

Christmas Night, 1896.

MY BELOVED LITTLE SPOUSE, – I am well pleased with thee! All the year round thou hast amused Me by playing *ninepins*. I was so overjoyed that the whole court of Angels was surprised and charmed. Several little cherubs have asked Me why I did not make them children. Others wanted to know if the melody of their instruments were not more pleasing to Me than thy joyous laugh when a ninepin fell at the struck of thy love-ball. May answer to them was, that they must not regret they are not children, since one day they would play with thee in the meadows of Heaven. I told them also thy smiles

were certainly more sweet to Me than their harmonies, because these smiles were purchased by suffering and forgetfulness of self.

And now, my cherished Spouse, it is my turn to ask something of thee. Thou wilt not refuse Me -- thou lovest Me too much. Let us change the game. Ninepins amuse me greatly, but at present I should like to play spinning a top, and, if thou dost consent, thou shalt be the top. I give thee one as a model. Thou has seest that it is ugly to look at, and would be kicked aside by whosoever did not know the game. But at the sight of a it a child would leap for joy and shout ; "What fun ! it will spin a whole day without stopping!"

Although though too are not attractive, I – the little Jesus – love thee, and beg of thee to keep always spinning to amuse Me. True, it needs a whip to make a top spin. Then let thy Sisters supply the whip, and be thou most grateful to those who shall make thee turn fastest. When I shall have had plenty of fun, I will bring thee to join Me here, and our games shall be full of unalloyed delight. – Thy little Brother, JESUS.

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I had the habit of constantly crying about the merest trifles, and this was the source of great pain to Soeur Therese. One day a bright idea occurred to her : taking a mussel-shell from her painting table, and, holding my hands lest I should prevent her, she gathered my tears in the shell, and soon they were turned into merry laughter.

" There," she said, "from this onwards I permit you to cry as much as you like on condition it is into the shell!"

A week, however, before her death I spent a whole evening in tears at the thought of her fast-approaching end. She knew it, and said : " You have been crying. Was it into the shell?" I was unable to tell an untruth, and my answer grieved her. " I am going to die," she continued, " and I shall not be at rest about you unless you promise to follow faithfully my advice. I consider it of the utmost importance for the good of your soul."

I promised what she asked, begging leave, however, as a favor, to be allowed to cry at her death. " But," she answered, " why cry at my death? Those tears will certainly be useless. You will be bewailing my happiness ! Still I have pity on your weakness, and for the first few days you have leave to cry, though afterwards you must again take up the shell."

It has cost me some heroic efforts, but I have been faithful. I have kept the shell at hand, and each time the wish to cry overcame me, I laid hold of the pitiless thing. However urgent the tears, the trouble of passing it from one eye to the other so distracted my thoughts, that before very long this ingenious method entirely cured me of my sensibility.

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Owing to a fault which had caused Soeur Therese much pain, but of which I had deeply repented, I intended to deprive myself of Holy Communion. I wrote to her of my resolution, and this was her reply; " Little flower, most dear to Jesus, by this humiliation your roots are feeding upon the earth. You must now open wide your petals, or rather lift high you head, so that the Manna of the Angels may, lie a divine dew, come down to

strengthen you and supply your wants. Good-night, poor little flower! ‘ Ask of Jesus that all your prayers offered for my cure may serve to i8ncrease the fire which ought to consume me.”

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“ At the moment of Communion I sometimes like my soul to that of a little child of three or four, whose hair has been ruffled and clothes soiled at play. This is a picture of what befalls me in my struggling with souls. But Our Blessed Lady comes promptly to the rescue, takes off *my soiled pinafore,* and arranges my hair, adorning it with a pretty ribbon or a simple flower. . . . Then I am quite nice, and able, without any shame, to seat myself at the Banquet of Angels.”

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In the infirmary we scarcely waited for the end of her thanksgiving before seeking her advice. At first, this somewhat distressed her, and, she would make gentle reproaches, but soon she yielded to us, saying: “I must not wish for more rest than Our Lord. When He withdrew into the desert after preaching, the crowds would come and intrude upon His solitude. Come, then, to me as much as you like: I must die sword in hand – *the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.’”*[18]

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“ Advise us,” we said to her, “ how to profit by our spiritual instructions.” “ Go for guidance with great simplicity, not counting too much on help which may fail you at any moment. You would thane have to say with the Spouse in the Canticles: ‘*The keepers took away my cloak and wounded me; when I had a little passed by them, I found Him whom my soul loveth..’*[19] If you ask with humility and with detachment after your Beloved the *keepers* will tell you. More often, you will find Jesus only when you have passed by all creatures. Many times have I repeated this verse of the Spiritual Canticle of John of the Cross:

‘ Messengers I pray, no more
Between us send, who know not how
To tell me what my spirit longs to know.
For they Thy charms who read –
For ever telling of a thousand more –
Make all my wounds to bleed,
While deeper than before
Doth an – I know not what I – my spirit grieve
With stammerings vague, and all life bereave.’”

[18] 1 Ephes. vi. 17.
[19] *Cf.* Cant. v. 7, iii. 4.

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" If, supposing the impossible, God Himself could not see my good actions, I would not be troubled. I love Him so much I would like to give Him joy without His knowing who gave. When He sees the gift being made, He is, as it were, obliged to make a return. . . . I should wish to spare Him the trouble."

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" Had I been rich, I could never have seen a poor person hungry without giving him to eat. This is my way also in the spiritual life.. There are many souls on the brink of hell, and as my earnings come to hand they are scattered among these sinners. The time has never yet been when I could say: ' Now I am going to work for myself.'"

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" There are people who make the worst of everything. As for me, I do just the contrary. I always see the good side of things which have seemed to me less good and less beautiful than the gifts made to others."

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" When staying with my aunt, while I was still a little girl, I was given a certain book to read. In one of the stories great praise was bestowed on a school-mistress who by her tact escaped from every difficulty without hurting anyone's feelings. Her method : ' You are right.' And to another : ' You are not wrong,' struck me particularly, and as I read I reflected that I would not have acted in that way because we should always tell the truth. And this I always do, though I grant it is much more difficult. It would be far less trouble for us, when told of a worry, to cast the blame on the absent. Less trouble. . . . nevertheless I do just the contrary, and if I am disliked it cannot be helped. Let the novices not come to me if they do not want to learn the truth."

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" Before a reproof[20] bear fruit it must cost something and be free from the least trace of passion. Kindness must not degenerate from weakness. When we have had good reason for finding fault, we must leave it, and not allow ourselves to worry over having given pain. To seek out the delinquent for the purpose of consoling her, is to do more harm than good. Left alone, she is compelled to look beyond creatures, and to turn to God; she is forced to see her faults and to humble herself. Otherwise she would become accustomed to expect consolation after a merited rebuke, and would act like a spoiled child who stamps and screams, knowing well that by this means its mother will be forced to return and dry its tears."

[20] In this and the following "counsel" it should be remembered that it is a Novice-Mistress who is speaking. [ED.]

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" *' Let the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, be ever in your mouth and in your hearts.'*[21] If we find any one particular person disagreeable we should never be disheartened, much less cease our endeavor to reform that soul. We should wield *the sword of the Spirit,* and so correct her faults. Things should never be allowed to pass for the sake of our own ease. We must carry on the war even when there is no hope of victory. Success matters nothing and we must fight on and never complain : ' I shall gain nothing from that soul, she does not understand, there is nothing for it but to abandon her..' That would be the act of a coward. We must do our duty to the very end."

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" Formerly, if any of my friends were in trouble, and I did not succeed in consoling them when they came to see me, I left the parlor quite heart-broken. Soon, however, Our Lord made me understand how incapable I was of bringing comfort to a soul, and from that day I no longer grieved when my visitors went away downcast. I confided to God the sufferings of those dear to me, and I felt sure that He heard my prayer. At their next visit, I learned that I was not mistaken. After this experience, I no longer worry when I have involuntarily given pain. . . . I simply ask Our Lord to make amends."

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`' What do you think of all the graces that have been heaped upon you ?"—" I think '*the Spirit of God breatheth where He will.'*"[22]

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" Mother," she one day said to the Prioress, " were I unfaithful, were it to commit even the smallest infidelity, I feel that my soul would be plunged into the most terrible anguish, and I would be unable to welcome death."

Mother Prioress evinced surprise at hearing her speak in this strain, and she continued : " I am speaking of infidelity in the matter of pride. If, for example, I were to say ' I have acquired such or such a virtue and I can practice it'; or again : ' My God, Thou knowest I love Thee too much to dwell on one single thought against the faith,' straightaway I should be assailed by the most dangerous temptations and should certainly yield. To prevent this misfortune I have but to say humbly and from my heart: ' My God, I beseech Thee not to let me be unfaithful.'

" I understand clearly how St. Peter fell. He placed too much reliance on his own ardent nature, instead of leaning solely on the Divine strength. Had he only said : ' Lord, give me strength to follow Thee unto death!' the grace would not have been refused him.

" How is it, Mother, that Our Lord, knowing what was about to happen did not say to him : ' Ask of Me the strength to do what is in thy mind?' I think His purpose was

[21] *Cf.* Ephes. vi. 17; Isaias lxi. 21.
[22] *Cf.* John iii. 8.

to give us a twofold lesson – first : that He taught His Apostles nothing by His presence which He does not teach through the inspirations of grace ; and secondly : that, having made choice of St. Peter to govern the whole Church, wherein there are many sinners, He wished him to test in himself what man can do without God's help. This is why Jesus said to him before his fall : *Thou being once converted confirm thy brethren' ;* [23] that is, ' Tell them the story of thy sin – show them by thy own experience, how necessary it is for salvation to rely solely upon Me.'"

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I was much afflicted at seeing her ill, and I often exclaimed : "life is so dreary ! " " Life is not dreary" – she would immediately say ; "on the contrary, it is most gay. Now if you said: ' Exile is dreary,' I could understand. It is a mistake to call ' life ' that which must have an end. Such a word should only be used of the joys of Heaven – joys that are unfading – and in this true meaning life is not sad but gay – most gay. . . ."

Her own gaiety was a thing of delight. For several days she had been must better, and we were saying to her : " We do not yet know of what disease you will die. . . ." 'But," she answered, " I shall die of death ! Did not God tell Adam of what he would die when He said to him : *'Thou shalt die of death'?"*[24]

"Then death will come to fetch you ? " – " No, not death, but the Good God. Death is not, as pictures tell us, a phantom, a horrid spectre. The Catechism says that it is the separation of soul and body – no more! Well, I do not fear a separation which will unite me for ever to God."

" Will the *Divine Thief* ," some one asked, " soon come to steal His little bunch of grapes?" " I see Him in the distance, and I take good care not to cry out : ' Stop thief ! ' Rather, I call Him : ' This way, this way.'"

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Asked under what name we should pray to her in Heaven, she answered humbly : " Call me *Little Therese.*"

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I was telling her that the most beautiful angels, all robed in white, would bear her soul to Heaven : " Fancies like those," she answered, " do not help me, and my soul can only feed upon truth. God and His Angels are pure spirits. No human ye can see them as they really are. That is why I have never asked extraordinary favors. I prefer to await the Eternal Vision."

" To console me at your death I have asked God to send me a beautiful dream." – " That is a thing I would never do. . .. ask for consolations. Since you wish to resemble me, you know what are my ideas on this:

' Fear not, O Lord, that I shall waken Thee :

[23] Luke xxii. 32.
[24] *Cf.* Gen. ii. 17. A play on the French : *Tu mourras de mort.* [ED.]

I shall await in peace the Heavenly Shore.'

" It is so sweet to serve God in the dark night and in the midst of trial. After all, we have but this life in which to live by faith."

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" I am happy at the thought of going to Heaven, but when I reflect on these words of our Lord: '*I come quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to his works,*'[25] I think that He will find my case a puzzle : I have no works. . . . Well, He will render unto me *according to His own works !"*

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" The chief plenary indulgence, which is within reach of everybody, and can be gained without the ordinary conditions, is that of charity – which '*covereth a multitude of sins.*'"[26]

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"Surely you will not even pass through Purgatory. If such a thing should happen, then certainly nobody goes straight to Heaven."—" That gives me little thought. I shall be quite content with the Merciful God's decision. Should I go to Purgatory, I shall – lie the three Hebrew children in the furnace – walk amid flames singing the Canticle of Love."

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" In Heaven you will be placed among the Seraphim."—"If so, I shall not imitate them. At the sight of God *they cover themselves with their wings*[27] : I shall take good care not to hide myself with mine."

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I showed her a picture which represented Joan of Arc being comforted in her prison by her Voice, and she remarked : " I am also comforted by an interior voice. From above, the Saints encourage me, saying : ' So long as thou art a captive in chains, thou canst not fulfill thy mission, but later on, after thy death, will come thy day of triumph.'"

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" In Heaven, God will do all I desire, because on Earth I have never done my own will."

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[25] Apoc. xxii. 12.
[26] Prov. x. 12.
[27] *Cf.* Isaias vi. 2.

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“ You will look down upon us from Heaven, will you not? “—“No, I will come down.”

Soeur Therese of Lisieux

Some months before the death of Soeur Therese, T*he Life of St. Aloysius* was being read in the refectory, and one of the Mothers was struck by the mutual and tender affection which existed between the young Saint and the aged Jesuit, Father Corbinelli.

" You are little Aloysius," she said to Therese, " and I am old Father Corbinelli—be mindful of me when you enter Heaven." " Would you like me to fetch you thither soon, dear Mother?" " No, I have not yet suffered enough." " Nay, Mother, I tell you that you have suffered quite enough." To which Mother Hermance replied : " I dare not say Yes. . . .In so grave a matter I must have the sanction of authority." So the request was made to the Mother Prioress, who, without attaching much importance to it, gave her sanction.

Now on one of the last days of her life, Soeur Therese, scarcely able to speak owing to her great weakness, received through the infirmarian a bouquet of flowers. It had been bothered by Mother Hermance, and was accompanied by an entreaty for one word of affection. The message came back : " Tell Mother Hermance of the Heart of Jesus that during mass this morning I saw Father Corbinelli's grave close to that of little Aloysius."

' That is well." Replied the good Mother, greatly touched; " tell Soeur Therese that I have understood. . . ." And from that moment she felt convinced that her death was near. It took place just one year later, and, according to the prediction of the "Little Aloysius," the two graves lie side by side.

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The last words penned by the hand of Soeur Therese were : " O Mary, were I Queen of Heaven, and wert thou Therese, I should wish to be Therese, that I might see thee Queen of Heaven ! "